

Lincoln Biographies 1860-1865

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BIOGRAPHY

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Biographies and Stories of Abraham Lincoln

Biographies, 1860-1865

Excerpts from newspapers and other
sources

From the files of the
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ored and unsung."

Now, men of Kentucky, I tell you JOHN C. BRECKINRIDGE has taken a fatal step. It cannot be dodged. He has placed himself at the head of these fire-eaters of the South.

JOHN BELL, OF TENNESSEE.

Well, now, so far as Mr. BELL is concerned, I believe he is a good man. [Immense applause, and voice, "That's so."] I think that he is going in the right direction. [Renewed applause and cheers for BELL.] I tell you I don't look upon that man as much of an enemy of mine, who says, "come weal, come woe, I will stand by the stars and stripes of the Union and the liberties of these States." [Long continued applause.] I am not the man to cast reflections upon him, but laying down our minor differences, I say that he is right in this. And if the worst comes to the worst, we expect to stand side by side in defence of our common liberty. [Great cheering.]

ABE LINCOLN.

Now, gentlemen, a few more words with regard to "Honest Old Abe," and I will let you off. [Voices—"Go on," "Hurrah for BELL," and "Good."] He was born down here, gentlemen, in Hardin County, Kentucky. He belonged to that class that a great many think it won't do to make Presidents of,—out that I think will do. He was what we call in the mountains a "one-gallows, bare-footed boy," and he went into the free State of Illinois, where every man is looked upon according to his merit,—where they don't ask who he is descended from; whether his grandfather was a Knight or a sheep-stealer it made no difference. [A Voice—"How about a nigger-thief?"] Or whether he was a nigger-thief, or the dog that guards the nigger, and takes the bread out of his own mouth to do it. He split rails. Yes, sirs, he took his maul and split rails. He had no more sense than that. [Laughter and applause.] When the public did not sufficiently educate him,—which they do there and which we do devilish little of here,—he educated himself, and then, in consequence of his fidelity, they made of him a Captain; not a militia Captain—not one of those captains to wear gaudy clothes and fine epaulettes, and whose principal business it is to go round the streets drinking whisky and run round at nights disturbing quiet people, and going to bed with their boots on, [Laughter,] but they made him captain of a flat-boat, and he went to New-Orleans and came back and handed the proceeds of his trip to his employers.

At about the age of 29 he studied some law and he rose to be one of the first lawyers in the State of Illinois, and when the Little Giant, the captain of the Pro-Slavery Democracy at that time, took the field in defence of the extension of Slavery as against Free Labor, of all the men of Illinois this one-gallows, bare-footed boy was taken up to meet him.

A BISTABLES—And he got badly beaten.

Mr. CLAY—No, Sir, he did not. He got the popular majority over DOUGLAS however much you may deny it. You tricked him out of being Senator, but you can't trick him out of being President.

Well, there was a Democrat in the mountains, and he said he had no notion of this thing; that he split rails once and he ought to be splitting them yet. I know that idea prevails in Kentucky, but he met this champion of the minority, and what do you think is the result? We took the speeches of both of them and sent them over the country as an electioneering document. And what do you Democrats do? You go away into some cellar and read them and then burn the book, lest any one else should see them. Is not that a glorious state of things? Does it not inspire manliness and confidence in the bosom of any man to know that really a man can have an open field and a fair fight, and the devil take the hindmost? If you want this equal manliness for yourselves go for ABRAHAM LINCOLN in 1860, and let us take possession of the Government.

Voices—"Hurrah for LINCOLN and hurrah for BELL. I am much obliged to you for your kind attention, and I now bid you a most respectful good night. I hope to meet you shortly at the polls helping to inaugurate "Honest Old Abe."

Mr. CLAY then retired and the immense crowd dispersed.

[From the Chester County (Pa.) Times.]

Among the distinguished men who by their patriotism and eloquence have assisted to create and sustain the party of constitutional freedom which now predominates in most of the free States, there is no one who has a firmer hold on the confidence and affections of the people of the Great West, or is more an object of their enthusiastic admiration, than Abraham Lincoln, of Springfield, Illinois. No traveler that visits the valley of the Mississippi, north of the Ohio, can fail to be impressed with the unrivalled popularity of that eminent Republican chief throughout that whole region; and it is impossible to doubt that he will be vigorously pressed upon the Chicago Convention, by the representatives of a large and earnest constituency, as a proper standard bearer of our great national party in the impending struggle for the Presidency.

Abraham Lincoln is a native of Hardin county, Kentucky. He was born on the 12th day of February, 1809. His parents were born in Virginia, and were certainly not of the first families. His paternal grandfather, Abraham Lincoln, emigrated from Rockingham county, Virginia, to Kentucky, about 1781 or '2, where a year or two later he was killed by Indians, not in battle, but by stealth, while he was laboring to open a farm in the forest. His ancestors, who were respectable members of the Society of Friends, went to Virginia from Berks county, Pennsylvania. Descendants of the same stock still reside in the eastern part of this State.

Mr. Lincoln's father, at the death of his father, was but six years of age, and he grew up literally without education. He removed from Kentucky to what is now Spencer County, Indiana, in 1816. The family reached their new home about the time the State was admitted into the Union. The region in which they settled was rude and wild, and they endured, for some years, the hard experience of a frontier life, in which the struggle with nature for existence and security is to be maintained only by constant vigilance and efforts. Bears, wolves and other wild animals still infested the woods, and young Lincoln acquired more skill in the use of the rifle than knowledge of books. There were institutions here and there known by the flattering denomination of "schools," but no qualification was required of a teacher beyond "reading," writing and cyphering, as the vernacular phrase ran, as far as the rule of three. If a stranger happened to understand Latin happened to sojourn in the neighborhood, he was looked upon as a wizard, and regarded with an awe suited to so mysterious a character.

Hard work and plenty of it was the order of the day, varied, indeed, by an occasional bear hunt, a not unimportant deer chase, or other sports. Of course when young Lincoln came of age he was not a scholar. He could read and write, and had some knowledge of arithmetic, but that was about all; and as yet, he had but little ambition to know more of what was to be found in books. His attainments otherwise were not to be despised. He had grown to be six feet four inches in stature, was active and athletic, could wield the axe, direct the plow, or use the rifle, as well as the best of his contemporaries, and was fully up to all the mysteries of prairie farming, and fully intrested to hardship and toil. Since he arrived at age he has not been to school. Whatever his acquirements are, they have been picked up from time to time as opportunity occurred, or as the pressure of some exigency demanded.

At twenty-one he removed to Illinois and passed the first year in Macon county, in active labor on a farm. Then he got to New Salem, at that time in Sangamon, now in Menard county, where he remained about a year as a sort of clerk in a store. Then came the Black Hawk war. A company of volunteers was raised in New Salem and the surrounding country, and young Lincoln was elected captain—a success which, he has since said, gave him more pleasure than any he has since enjoyed. He served with credit during the campaign, and became popular. On his return in the fall of 1832, he was a candidate for the Legislature, and, alas, was beaten. This is the only time that he has ever failed in an election by the people whom he has sought to influence. The next and three succeeding biennial elections he was elected to the Legislature, and served with distinguished reputation in that body. While a member of the Legislature he first gave indications of his superior powers as a debater, and he increased, by frequent practice, his natural faculty for public speaking. His latent ambition was excited by success, he improved industriously the opportunities that offered of self-cultivation. From the position of a subaltern in the ranks of the Whig party, a position which was appropriately assigned him by his unaffected modesty and humble pretensions, he soon became recognized and acknowledged as a champion and a leader, and his appearing

contested the question of the growing magnitude of the slave question and of the need of a strong effort to preserve the Territories to freedom. Mr. Lincoln was among the first to join in the formation of the Republican party, although the public opinion around him was strongly adverse to that movement. He exerted himself for the organization of the Republican forces in Illinois, and attended the first Republican Convention held in the State. This was in Bloomington in May, 1856. His speech in that convention was of surprising power and eloquence, and produced great effect. In the contest of that year, Mr. Lincoln was at the head of the Illinois electoral ticket, and labored earnestly, though vainly, to wrest that State from the grasp of the pro-slavery Democracy, with the "walking magazine of mischief," as Douglas has been appropriately called, at its head.

When the campaign of 1858 was about to open, the voice of the Republican party of Illinois was so unanimous and enthusiastic in its favor as the successor of Judge Douglas, that in a full State Convention of over five hundred delegates the unusual step was taken of nominating him for that office by acclamation. The enthusiasm of the delegates in Convention extended to their constituents. The party went into the contest with the name of Lincoln on all their banners, instituted Lincoln clubs, wore Lincoln badges, and held Lincoln meetings at almost every school house in the State. The respective parties were marshaled under leaders, who were fitting representatives of the principles of each. Lincoln, the consistent advocate of constitutional government, cognizant of inalienable rights, and animated and controlled by a sense of human responsibility independent of conventional rules, placed himself upon the battlements of the Constitution, and summoned to his side the friends of law, order and humanity. Douglas, in the spirit of a system which assigns all power to a majority, and flatters the people in the concrete, while it cheats the individual of all security for his personal rights, appealed to popular prejudice and to the antipathies of race. The one used slavery to be an institution in conflict with the principles of free government, wholly dependant upon positive law, and never to be extended where it could be legitimately prohibited; while the other avowed that the despotic will of any majority, though of a community existing only in a state of papalage under the guardianship of federal authority "ought to be competent to establish it without question by that authority" without regard to moral considerations. The contest excited intense interest and was maintained with infinite spirit. Lincoln, after vainly attempting to draw his opponent into a joint canvass of an entire State, met him in several great debates in his many Congressional districts, and in the opinion of every candid judge, fairly overthrew him in argument on all controverted points. The result was, that though a majority of the popular vote was obtained by Lincoln, Douglas obtained by the instrumentalty of an old and grossly unequal apportionment of the districts a majority of the Representatives, and thus secured his re-election to the U. S. Senate.

Since that great contest, Mr. Lincoln has repeatedly given his powerful aid in support of the Republican cause in other States, as in Ohio, Wisconsin and Kansas, during the present year, and in every instance he has been received with enthusiasm by the people, evincing of the hold he has on the popular heart. Wherever he speaks he draws together large crowds of interested listeners, upon whom he never fails to make a marked impression. Though a ready and fluent speaker, he avoids declamation, and is never betrayed into mere word painting, which his good taste habitually rejects. He abhors emptiness as heartily as did the great Webster in his prime, and employs as the vehicle of his thoughts a style of singular clearness and simplicity. In his statements of facts he is scrupulously accurate, and to every opponent he exhibits the most fairness, candor and liberality, rearing no abuse, but preserving in unflinching contest even under the severest provocation. His manner is earnest, his arguments close and logical, and he reaches his conclusions by a process that seems to render those conclusions inevitable. Whether you agree with him or not, you cannot listen to him without being satisfied of his sincerity, and that his object is not victory, but truth.

In private life Mr. Lincoln is a strictly moral and temperate man of frank and engaging manners, of kind and good nature, unaffectedly modest, social in disposition, ready in conversation, and passing easily from grave to gay and from gay to grave, according to the humor of the hour or the requirements of the occasion, with the same accuracy and grace, as a consummate politician, a good citizen, and an honest patriot.

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Chicago Tribune Feb 23, 1860.

the others 180 feet each. In the principal tower is hung the bell called Great Tom of Lincoln. Among its educational institutions is Christ's hospital, or the blue-coat school, which has an annual revenue of £2,000. Lincoln returns two members to parliament.

LINCOLN, ABRAHAM, an American lawyer and statesman, born in a part of Hardin co., Ky., which is now included in Larue co., Feb. 12, 1809. His ancestors, who were Quakers, went from Berks co., Penn., to Rockingham co., Va., and from there his grandfather Abraham removed with his family to Kentucky about 1782, and was killed by Indians in 1784. Thomas Lincoln, the father of Abraham, was born in Virginia, and in 1806 married Nancy Hanks, also a Virginian. In 1816 he removed with his family to what is now Spencer co., Ind., where Abraham, being large for his age, was put to work with an axe to assist in clearing away the forest, and for the next 10 years was mostly occupied in hard labor on his father's farm. He went to school at intervals, amounting in the aggregate to about a year, which was all the school education he ever received. At the age of 19 he made a trip to New Orleans as a hired hand upon a flat boat. In March, 1830, he removed with his father from Indiana, and settled in Macon co., Ill., where he helped to build a log cabin for the family home, and to make enough rails to fence 10 acres of land. In the following year he hired himself at \$12 a month to assist in building a flat boat, and afterward in taking the boat to New Orleans. On his return from this voyage his employer put him in charge as clerk of a store and mill at New Salem, then in Sangamon, now in Menard co., Ill. On the breaking out of the Black Hawk war in 1832 he joined a volunteer company, and to his surprise was elected captain of it, a promotion which, he says, gave him more pleasure than any subsequent success in life. He served for 3 months in the campaign, and on his return was in the same year nominated a whig candidate for the legislature; but the county being democratic, he was beaten, though his own election precinct gave him 277 votes and only 7 against him. He next opened a country store, which was not prosperous, was appointed postmaster of New Salem, and now began to study law by borrowing from a neighboring lawyer books which he took in the evening and returned in the morning. The surveyor of Sangamon co. offering to depute to him that portion of his work which was in his part of the county, Mr. Lincoln procured a compass and chain and a treatise on surveying, and did the work. In 1834 he was elected to the legislature by the highest vote cast for any candidate, and was reelected in 1836, 1838, and 1840. In 1836 he obtained a license to practise law, and in April, 1837, removed to Springfield, and opened an office in partnership with Major John F. Stuart. He rose rapidly to distinction in his profession, and was especially eminent as an advocate in jury trials. He did not, however,

withdraw from politics, but continued for many years a prominent leader of the whig party in Illinois. He was several times a candidate for presidential elector, and as such in 1844 he canvassed the entire state, together with part of Indiana, in behalf of Henry Clay, making almost daily speeches to large audiences. In 1846 he was elected a representative in congress from the central district of Illinois, and took his seat on the first Monday of Dec. 1847. In congress he voted for the reception of anti-slavery memorials and petitions; for motions by Mr. Giddings for committees to inquire into the constitutionality of slavery in the district of Columbia, and the expediency of abolishing the slave trade in the district; for various resolutions prohibiting slavery in the territory to be acquired from Mexico. He voted 42 times in favor of the Wilmot proviso. On Jan. 16, 1849, he offered to the house a scheme for abolishing slavery in the district by compensating the slave-owners from the treasury of the United States, provided a majority of citizens of the district should vote for the acceptance of the proposed act. He opposed the annexation of Texas, but voted for the loan bill to enable the government to defray the expenses of the Mexican war. He voted also in favor of river and harbor improvements, in favor of a protective tariff, and of selling the public lands at the lowest cost price. He was a member of the whig national convention of 1848, and advocated the nomination of Gen. Taylor. In 1849 he was a candidate for the U. S. senate, but the legislature was democratic, and elected Gen. Shields. After the expiration of his congressional term Mr. Lincoln applied himself to his profession till the repeal of the Missouri compromise called him again into the political arena. He entered with energy into the canvass which was to decide the choice of a U. S. senator in place of Gen. Shields, and it was mainly to his exertions that the triumph of the republicans and the election of Judge Trumbull to the senate was attributed. At the republican national convention in 1856, by which Col. Fremont was nominated for president, the Illinois delegation ineffectually urged Mr. Lincoln's nomination for the vice-presidency.—On June 2, 1858, the republican state convention met at Springfield, and unanimously nominated him as candidate for U. S. senator in opposition to Mr. Douglas. The two candidates canvassed the state together, speaking on the same day at the same place. The debate was conducted with eminent ability on both sides, and excited universal interest. In the course of this debate Mr. Lincoln said, in reply to questions from his antagonist: "I do not now, nor ever did, stand in favor of the unconditional repeal of the fugitive slave law. I do not now, nor ever did, stand pledged against the admission of any more slave states into the Union. I do not stand pledged against the admission of a new state into the Union with such a constitution as the people of that state may see fit to make. I do not stand to-day pledged to the

abolition of slavery in the district of Columbia. I do not stand pledged to the prohibition of the slave trade between the different states. I am impliedly, if not expressly, pledged to a belief in the right and duty of congress to prohibit slavery in all the United States territories." He said further in explanation of these answers: "In regard to the fugitive slave law, I have never hesitated to say, and I do not now hesitate to say, that I think, under the constitution of the United States, the people of the southern states are entitled to a congressional fugitive slave law. Having said that, I have had nothing to say in regard to the existing fugitive slave law, further than that I think it should have been framed so as to be free from some of the objections that pertain to it, without lessening its efficiency. And, inasmuch as we are not now in an agitation in regard to an alteration or modification of that law, I would not be the man to introduce it as a new subject of agitation upon the general question of slavery. In regard to the other question, of whether I am pledged to the admission of any more slave states into the Union, I state to you very frankly that I would be exceedingly sorry ever to be put in a position of having to pass upon that question. I should be exceedingly glad to know that there would never be another slave state admitted into the Union; but I must add that, if slavery shall be kept out of the territories during the territorial existence of any one given territory, and then the people shall, having a fair chance and a clear field, when they come to adopt their constitution, do such an extraordinary thing as to adopt a slave constitution, uninfluenced by the actual presence of the institution among them, I see no alternative, if we own the country, but to admit them into the Union. In regard to the abolition of slavery in the district of Columbia, I have my mind very distinctly made up. I should be exceedingly glad to see slavery abolished in the district of Columbia. I believe that congress possesses the constitutional power to abolish it. Yet as a member of congress I should not with my present views be in favor of endeavoring to abolish slavery in the district of Columbia unless it would be upon these conditions: 1, that the abolition should be gradual; 2, that it should be on a vote of the majority of qualified voters in the district; and 3, that compensation should be made to unwilling owners. With these three conditions, I confess I would be exceedingly glad to see congress abolish slavery in the district of Columbia, and, in the language of Henry Clay, 'sweep from our capital that foul blot upon our nation.'" The result of the election was a vote of 125,275 for the republican candidates, who were pledged to the election of Mr. Lincoln, 121,190 for the Douglas candidates, and 5,071 for the Leocompton candidates. Mr. Lincoln had thus a majority of more than 4,000 on the popular vote over Mr. Douglas; but the latter was elected senator by the legislature, in which his supporters had a majority of 8 on joint ballot.—On May

16, 1860, the republican national convention met at Chicago, and on May 18 began to ballot for a candidate for president. The whole number of votes was 465—necessary to a choice, 233. On the first ballot Mr. Seward received 173½, Mr. Lincoln 102, Mr. Cameron 50½, and Mr. Bates 48, while the rest were scattered among several candidates. On the second ballot Mr. Seward had 184½, and Mr. Lincoln 181. On the third ballot Mr. Lincoln had 354, Mr. Seward 110½, Mr. Dayton 1, and Judge McLean ½ a vote. The nomination of Mr. Lincoln was subsequently made unanimous on motion of the chairman of the New York delegation.

LINCOLN, BENJAMIN, an American general, born in Hingham, Mass., Jan. 24, 1733, died there, May 9, 1810. Until the age of 40 he followed the calling of a farmer, holding also at different times the offices of magistrate, representative in the provincial legislature, and colonel of militia. He was also an active member of the 3 provincial congresses of Massachusetts, and as a militia officer displayed an efficiency which procured his promotion in 1776 to the rank of major-general. In this capacity he became favorably known to Washington during the siege of Boston. After the American defeat on Long island he was despatched by the council of Massachusetts to join Washington with a body of militia, and he subsequently participated in the battle of White Plains and other engagements. In the beginning of 1777 he joined Washington at Morristown with a new levy of militia, and soon after, at the suggestion of the commander-in-chief, was transferred to the continental service with the rank of major-general. After serving for several months in New Jersey, he was sent to join the forces assembled to oppose the progress of Burgoyne, and during the battle of Bemus's heights commanded inside the American works. On the succeeding day, while reconnoitring in the vicinity of the enemy's position, he was severely wounded in the leg, and compelled for nearly a year to retire from service. In Sept. 1778, he was appointed to the command of the southern army, and for several months was engaged in protecting Charleston against the demonstrations of Gen. Prevost. Upon the arrival of Count d'Estate he cooperated with the French troops and fleet in the unsuccessful assault on Savannah; and from the unwillingness of his allies to continue the siege he was obliged to return to Charleston, where in the spring of 1780 he was besieged by a superior British force under Sir Henry Clinton. After an obstinate defence he was forced in May to capitulate, and in November retired to Massachusetts on parole. In the spring of the succeeding year he was exchanged, and immediately joined Washington on the Hudson, and subsequently participated with credit in the siege of Yorktown. In consideration of his merits and misfortunes Washington appointed him to receive the sword of Cornwallis upon the surrender of the British forces. He held the office of secretary of war for two years from

The Late Abraham Lincoln—His Early Life and Public Character.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN was born on the 12th of February, 1809 in Hardin County, Kentucky, and died when 56 years, 2 months and 3 days old. Mr. RAYMOND, of the New York Times, says, in the opening chapter of his history of Mr. LINCOLN's Administration, which is the best constructed of the many volumes written, of Mr. LINCOLN's life and labors:

"His early life, like that of most of the great men whom our country has produced, was spent in poverty and toil. At seven years of age he was sent to school to a Mr. Hazel, carrying with him an old copy of Dilworth's spelling book, one of the three books that formed the family library. His father keenly felt the disadvantages arising from his own lack of education, and determined, in spite of difficulties almost insurmountable, to give his son better facilities for study than he had himself enjoyed. His mother was a Christian woman, and desired earnestly that he should learn to read the Bible."

When ABRAHAM LINCOLN was eight years old his father moved to Spencer County, Indiana. He learned to read the Bible before his mother died, which event occurred when he was ten years of age. Mr. RAYMOND says:

"After awhile he learned to write. This was an accomplishment which most of the friendly neighbors thought unnecessary, but his father quietly persisted, and the boy was set down as a prodigy when he wrote to an old friend of his mother's, a traveling preacher, and begged him to come and preach a sermon over his mother's grave. Three months after Parson Elkins came, and the friends assembled, a year after her death, to pay a last tribute of respect to one universally loved and respected. Her son's share in securing the presence of the clergyman was not unmentioned, and Abraham soon found himself called upon to write letters for his neighbors."

"The father married a second time, a Miss Sally Johnston, who proved an excellent mother to the step-son, and who now survives, to take her share of the credit to which she is entitled for her faithful care. In the course of a year or two, a Mr. Crawford, one of the settlers, opened a school in his own cabin, and Abraham's father improved the opportunity to send him, in order that he might add some knowledge of arithmetic to his reading and writing. With buckskin clothes, a raccoon-skin cap, and an old arithmetic, which had been found somewhere for him, he commenced his studies in the 'higher branches.'"

These particulars of the life of the President in his boyhood are of great interest, as they were undoubtedly derived from himself.

The history of Mr. LINCOLN's public life is so familiar to all men, that we need not repeat its points, though it may not now be superfluous to say, that he owed his national reputation to his debates with Senator DOUGLAS in the memorable canvass of the State of Illinois in 1858. DOUGLAS was recognized as the most formidable debater in a stump contest, in the country, and the incomparable temper, clear-sighted views of public policy, and exceedingly closely knit arguments with which the Republican champion met the Democratic giant, warmed his friends to enthusiasm, and they flocked to Chicago when the Presidential Convention assembled there in 1860, animated by a spirit in his behalf that overcome all opposition.

Mr. LINCOLN has been accused of wanting in personal dignity, and in an adequate sense of the responsibilities attaching to his position. But we may challenge the records of the lives of our public men for any thing in better taste than his words of informal acceptance of the nomination for the Presidency, addressed to the committee sent from Chicago, to wait upon him at his home in Springfield, Illinois. He is said to have listened to the address of the Committee "with a degree of grave dignity, that almost wore

the appearance of sadness." He replied: "Mr. Chairman, and Gentlemen of the Committee:

"I tender to you, and, through you, to the Republican National Convention, and all the people represented in it, my profoundest thanks for the high honor done me, which you now formally announce. Deeply, and even painfully sensible of the great responsibility which is inseparable from this high honor—a responsibility which I could almost wish had fallen upon some of the far more eminent men and experienced statesmen, whose distinguished names were before the Convention, I shall, by your leave, consider more fully the resolutions of the Convention denominated the platform, and, without any unnecessary and unreasonable delay, respond to you, Mr. Chairman, in writing, not doubting that the platform will be found satisfactory, and the nomination gratefully accepted. And now I will no longer defer the pleasure of taking you, and each of you, by the hand."

As to his manners and home habits, Judge DICKSON, of this city, who had unusual opportunities to know well of what he was speaking, said in a public speech the night before the assassination:

"He brought not to the White House the culture of the college, nor the fastidiousness of the court; but the homely virtues of a plain, honest man of the people—perfect simplicity of character, integrity of purpose, and unaffected dignity. His manners have been the theme, with his enemies, of the most flagitious falsehood. I had some acquaintance with him before he became President. I know those who knew him well at his home and elsewhere, when he was a private citizen; and neither I nor they ever heard him use a

vulgar word, or saw him do any thing that would have been in the slightest degree offensive to the most fastidious. He often enlivened the conversation by an apt anecdote, often by the same means exposed the fallacy of an elaborate but unsound argument; sometimes he indulged in sallies of wit, but, in one respect, he differed from all professional wits I have known; his was a keen weapon, but was never barbed or touched with poison—it left no sting behind."

As to the character of Mr. LINCOLN, as a public man, we find in the London Spectator, of March 25, a remarkable article, a portion of which we copy. Says the Spectator:

"We all remember the animated eulogium on General Washington which Lord Macaulay passed parenthetically in his essay on Hampden: 'It was when the sullen tyranny of Laud and Charles had succeeded the fierce conflict of sects and factions, ambitious of ascendancy or burning for revenge; it was when the vices and ignorance which the old tyranny had engendered threatened the new freedom with destruction, that England missed the sobriety, the self-command, the perfect soundness of judgment, the perfect rectitude of intention to which the history of revolutions furnishes no parallel, or furnishes a parallel in Washington alone.' If that high eulogium was fully earned, as it was, by the first great President of the United States, we doubt if it has not been as well earned by the Illinois peasant-proprietor and 'village lawyer' whom, by some divine inspiration or providence, the Republican caucus of 1860 substituted for Mr. Seward as their nominee for the President's chair. No doubt he has in many ways had a lighter task than Washington, for he had not, at least, to produce a government out of chaos, but only to express and execute the purposes of a people far more highly organized for political life than that with which Washington had to deal. But without the advantages of Washington's educational training, Mr. Lincoln was called from an humble station, at the opening of a mighty civil war, to form a government out of a party in which the habits and traditions of official life did not exist. Finding himself the object of Southern abuse so fierce and so long that in any man less passionate it would long ago have stirred up an implacable animosity, mocked at for his official awkwardness, and denounced, for his steadfast policy, by all the Democratic section of the loyal States, tried by years of failure before that policy achieved a single great success, further tried by a series of successes so rapid and brilliant that they would have puffed up a smaller mind and upset his balance, embarrassed by the hostilities of his people and of his subordinates, no less than by his own inexperience in his

relations with foreign States, beset by fanatics of principle, on one side, who would pay no attention to his obligations as a constitutional ruler, and by fanatics of caste on the other, who were not only deaf to the claims of justice, but would hear of no policy large enough for a revolutionary emergency, Mr. Lincoln has persevered through all without ever giving way to anger, or despondency, or exaltation, or popular oratory, or sectional fanaticism, or caste prejudice, visibly growing in force of character, in self-possession, and in magnanimity, till in his last short message to Congress, on the 4th of March, we can detect no longer the rude and vulgar mold of a village-lawyer's thought, but find it replaced by a grasp of principle, a dignity of manner, and a solemnity of purpose which would have been unworthy neither of Hampden nor of Cromwell, while his gentleness and generosity of feeling toward his foes are almost greater than we should expect from either of them."

Again the writer analyzes Mr. LINCOLN's true Republicanism—his deference to the people—in contrast with the Cæsarism of NAPOLEON, in these terms:

"Mr. Lincoln presents more powerfully than any man that quality in the American mind which, though in weak men it becomes boastfulness, is not really this in root, but a range, an almost humiliated, trust in the structural power of that political nature which, without any statesman's co-operation, is slowly building up a free nation or free nations on that great continent, with an advance as steady as that of the rivers or the tides. It is the phase of political thought most opposite to, though it is sometimes compared with, the Cæsarism that is growing up on the European side of the Atlantic. The Emperor of the French thinks the Imperial organ of the nation almost greater than the nation—certainly an essential part of it. It is men like Mr. Lincoln, who really believe devoutly, indeed too passively, in the 'logic of events,' but then they think the logic of events the word of God. The Cæsar thinks also of the logic of events, but he regards himself not as its servant, but its prophet. He makes events when the logic would not appear complete without his aid, points the slow logic of the Almighty with epigram, fits the unrolling history with showy, historical denouements, cuts the knot of raveled providences, and stills the birth-throes of revolution with the chloroform of despotism. Mr. Lincoln is a much sturdier and slower sort of politician, but we doubt if any politician has ever shown less personal ambition, and a larger power of trust."

In these well-considered paragraphs, we see the favorable impression that our President had made abroad, and the marks of the great growth of his reputation.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, like his great political rival and sincere personal friend, STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS, died at the moment when he had gained the confidence of all good citizens—of all who were for the maintenance of the laws—and was just developing his highest capacities for usefulness, and in his case, as in that of DOUGLAS, the bitterness of his political opponents hasten with the foremost of his friends to do him honor; and the animosities of the past are almost (would they were altogether) forgotten, in the general sorrow of the present. Concerning the work he was doing when the bullet of the murderer sent him to his rest, and particularly regarding his last public utterance—his speech on the policy of reconstruction—we repeat a few sentences of an editorial article prepared for Saturday's Commercial, which appeared in but a part of the edition of that day. They express our opinions as well as we are able to give them in a few words, and seem the more emphatic, as they were written and put in type on the day of the assassination, and before the hideous deed was done:

"The speech of the President was a dispassionate utterance, and shows that he is a sober man, fully comprehending the responsibilities that pertain to his position. The accusation against him is that he did not make a sensational speech—did not draw tremendous ap-

plause very frequently. Let us be thankful for that. Fortunately, the vehemence with which a speech is applauded can not be taken as the true index of its merits. The highest wisdom is not associated with the greatest noise. In these times of excessive excitement, it is not the safe counselor, who wins the quickest and loudest tokens of approbation.

"People, who want the President to make flashy speeches, forget that, owing to the peculiar condition of our country, and particularly its wonderful development of military and naval power, the words of the Chief Magistrate have a weight in the world's affairs as great as those of the Emperor of France.

"The speech of the President, full of his homely phrases as it is, is pervaded by a thoughtfulness, intent upon the public good, a wholesome kindliness of spirit, and a grave sense of care for the discharge of the solemn duties that press upon him that we are very glad to see. There is real statesmanship in it—that is, the application of common sense to public affairs. There is an absence of individual obtrusiveness, and of adventurous speculation, that will win for him, at once, the sympathy and confidence of people, whose good wishes and favorable opinion are worthy a statesman's solicitude.

IT is a notable and rather extraordinary fact that the most widely circulated life of Abraham Lincoln was written in the old Tribune office, at Nassau and Spruce streets, by John Locke Scripps, sixty-five years ago this summer, soon after Lincoln was nominated at the Chicago convention in June, 1860.

Mr. Scripps was founder of "The Chicago Democratic Press," in 1851. In 1858 "The Chicago Press" and "The Chicago Tribune" were consolidated, with Mr. Scripps as chief editor.

Horace Greeley and John Locke Scripps were about equally potential in bringing about the 1860 nomination of Lincoln—Locke by his propaganda in "The Chicago Press and Tribune" and Greeley in the convention in smashing the Seward-Weed slate.

Scripps came on from Chicago, temporarily dropping his very important editorial work, in order to have Greeley's help in writing this first authentic life.

Writing to his brother, the late George W. Scripps, of Detroit, in the summer of 1860, John Locke Scripps says:

"I have been getting out a campaign life of Lincoln for the million, which is published simultaneously by us and by The New York Tribune establishment. I presume a very large edition will be sold. I will send you a copy by this day's mail. We sell them at the very low rate of \$20 per thousand."

Grace Locke Scripps Dyche, of Evanston, in 1900, when she wrote a

memorial of her father, John Locke Scripps, had great difficulty in obtaining a copy of this 32-page pamphlet life of Lincoln, printed literally "for the million," and sold at 2 cents apiece.

Joseph Medill, partner of Mr. Scripps, wrote Mrs. Dyche in 1895 that he had not seen a copy of the pamphlet since the 1871 Chicago fire, which consumed those owned by "The Chicago Tribune."

Whitelaw Reid informed Mrs. Dyche: "Answering your recent inquiry concerning the pamphlet life of Lincoln, by your father, I regret to say that no trace of it can be found here. The fact that forty years have elapsed, and that The Tribune counting room has undergone two removals during the construction of the new building, one riot and some small fires in the interval, will serve to explain why papers that have served their purpose are not apt to be found on file."

This pamphlet life, "printed for the million," is very rarely found outside of Lincoln collections. One with the Chicago imprint sells for close to \$100.

Lincoln scrutinized every word of the Scripps pamphlet. Scripps wrote that Lincoln in his youth had read Plutarch's Lives, it being a well known work in the middle West even at that time. When the advance sheets of the book reached Mr. Lincoln he sent for Mr. Scripps (who went to Springfield on the call) and said gravely: "That paragraph wherein you said I read Plutarch's Lives was not true. I wrote it, for up to that time I had never seen a contribution to human history."

your book, even if it is nothing more than a campaign sketch, to be faithful to the facts, and in order that that statement might be literally true I secured the book a few days ago and have just read it through."

Incidentally, this was no slight task, as Lincoln was busy day and night following the nominating convention meeting delegations, politicians and office-seekers.

This pamphlet life by Scripps is the only one that can be considered as undeniably authentic. The other early lives by William Dean Howells, J. H. Barrett, J. Q. Howard, D. W. Bartlett, and one or two others, doubtless had the sanction of Lincoln, but there is no record that he read and revised them in advance, as he did the one written almost wholly in the old Tribune office. In view of this, Scripps's description of Lincoln's characteristics is interesting:

"In his personal habits Mr. Lincoln is as simple as a child. He loves a good dinner and eats with the appetite which goes with a great brain, but his food is plain and nutritious. He never drinks intoxicating liquors of any sort. He is not addicted to tobacco in any of its shapes. He was never accused of a licentious act in his life. He never uses profane language. He never gambles. He is particularly cautious about incurring pecuniary obligations for any purpose whatever, and in debt he is never content until the score is discharged. We presume he owes no man a dollar. He never speculates. The rage for the sudden acquisition of wealth never took hold of him. His gains from his profession have been moderate, but sufficient for his purposes. While others have dreamed of gold, he has been in pursuit of knowledge. In all his dealings he has the reputation of being generous but exact, and, above all, religiously honest. He would be a bold man who would say that Abraham Lincoln ever wronged a man out of a cent, or even spent a dollar that he had not honestly earned. His struggles in early life have made him careful of money, but his generosity with his own is proverbial. He is a regular attendant upon religious worship, and, though not a communicant, is a pewholder and liberal supporter of the Presbyterian Church in Springfield, to which Mrs. Lincoln belongs. He is a scrupulous teller of the truth—too exact in his notions to suit the atmosphere of Washington as it now is. His enemies may say that he tells black Republican lies; but no man ever charged that, in a professional capacity or as a citizen dealing with his neighbors, he would depart from the Scriptural command. At home he lives like a gentleman of modest means and simple tastes. A good sized house of wood, simply but tastefully furnished, surrounded by trees and flowers, is his own; there he lives at peace with himself, the idol of his family, and for his honesty, ability and patriotism

LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

BY W. D. HOWELLS



*This campaign biography corrected
by the hand of Abraham Lincoln
in the summer of 1860 is reproduced
here with careful attention to
the appearance of the
original volume.*



SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

Abraham Lincoln Association

1938

SAMPLE PAGE

LIFE AND SPEECHES OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN. 41

Defeated, but far from dismayed, Lincoln once more turned his attention to business. He was still poor, for though thrifty enough, he never could withstand the appeals of distress, nor sometimes refuse to become security for those who asked the use of his name. His first surveying had been done with a grape-vine instead of a chain, and having indorsed a note which was not paid, his compass was seized and sold. One James Short bought it and returned it to Lincoln. The surveyor of Sangamon county, John Calhoun, (since notorious for his candle-box concealment of the election returns in Kansas,) deputed to Lincoln that part of the county in which he resided, and he now assumed the active practice of surveying, and continued to live upon the slender fees of his office until 1834, when he was elected to the Legislature by the largest vote cast for any candidate.

Before this election Lincoln had engaged and failed in merchandising on his own account.

It is supposed that it was at New Salem that Lincoln, while a "clerk" in O'futt's store, first saw Stephen A. Douglas, and, probably, the acquaintance was renewed during Lincoln's proprietorship of the store which he afterward bought in the same place.

* Lincoln expressly stated, in reply to some badinage of Douglas, during the debates of 1858, that he never kept a grocery anywhere. Out West, a grocery is understood to be a place where the chief article of commerce is whisky. Lincoln's establishment was, in the Western sense, a store; that is, he sold tea, coffee, sugar, powder, lead, and other luxuries and necessities of pioneer existence. Very possibly his store was not without the "elixir of life," with which nearly everybody renewed the flower of youth in those days; though this is not a matter of absolute history, nor perhaps of vital consequence.

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LINCOLN LORE

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Number 617

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

February 3, 1941

EARLIEST LINCOLN BIOGRAPHY

Joseph J. Lewis of Westchester, Pennsylvania, might be called the first biographer of Abraham Lincoln. He prepared for the *Chester County Times*, largely from source material furnished by Jesse W. Fell of Bloomington, Illinois, a story of Lincoln's life and achievements which was published on February 11, 1860. It was reprinted in many papers throughout the country as it here appears.

Among the distinguished men who by their patriotism and eloquence have assisted to create and sustain the party of constitutional freedom which now predominates in most of the free States, there is no one who has a firmer hold on the confidence and affections of the people of the Great West, or is more an object of their enthusiastic admiration, than Abraham Lincoln, of Springfield, Illinois. No traveler that visits the valley of the Mississippi, north of the Ohio, can fail to be impressed with the unrivalled popularity of that eminent Republican chief throughout that whole region; and it is impossible to doubt that he will be vigorously pressed upon the Chicago Convention, by the representatives of a large and earnest constituency, as a proper standard bearer of our great national party in the impending struggle for the Presidency.

Abraham Lincoln is a native of Hardin county, Kentucky. He was born on the 12th day of February, 1809. His parents were both born in Virginia, and were certainly not of the first families. His paternal grandfather, Abraham Lincoln, emigrated from Rockingham county, Virginia, to Kentucky, about 1781 or '2, where a year or two later he was killed by Indians, not in battle, but by stealth, while he was laboring to open a farm in the forest. His ancestors, who were respectable members of the Society of Friends, went to Virginia from Berks county, Pennsylvania. Descendants of the same stock still reside in the eastern part of this State.

Mr. Lincoln's father, at the death of his father, was but six years of age, and he grew up literally without education. He removed from Kentucky to what is now Spencer County, Indiana, in 1816. The family reached their new home about the time the State was admitted into the Union. The region in which they settled was rude and wild, and they endured, for some years, the hard experience of a frontier life, in which the struggle with nature for existence and security is to be maintained only by constant vigilance and efforts. Bears, wolves and other wild animals still infested the woods, and young Lincoln acquired more skill in the use of the rifle than knowledge of books. There were institutions here and there known by the flattering denomination of "schools," but no qualification was required of a teacher beyond "readin', writin' and cypherin'," as the vernacular phrase ran, as far as the rule of three. If a straggler supposed to understand Latin happened to sojourn in the neighborhood, he was looked upon as a wizard, and regarded with an awe suited to so mysterious a character.

Hard work and plenty of it was the order of the day, varied, indeed, by an occasional bear hunt, a not unfrequent deer chase, or other wild sport. Of course when young Lincoln came of age he was not a scholar. He could read and write, and had some knowledge of arithmetic, but that was about all; and as yet, he had but little ambition to know more of what was to be found in books. His attainments otherwise were not to be despised. He had grown to be six feet four inches in stature, was active and athletic, could wield the axe, direct the plow, or use the rifle, as well as the best of his compeers, and was fully up to all the mysteries of prairie farming, and fully inured to hardship and toil. Since he arrived at age he has not been to school. Whatever his acquirements are, they have been picked up from time to time as opportunity occurred, or as the pressure of some exigency demanded.

At twenty-one he removed to Illinois and passed the first year in Macon county, in active labor on a farm. Then he got to New Salem, at that time in Sangamon, now in Menard county, where he remained about a year as a sort of clerk in a store. Then came the Black Hawk war. A company of volunteers was raised in New Salem and the surrounding country, and young Lincoln was elected captain—a success which, he has since said, gave him more pleasure than any he has since enjoyed. He served with credit during the campaign, and became popular. On his return in the fall of 1832, he was a candidate for the Legislature, and ran, but was beaten. This is the only time that he has ever failed of an election by the people when he has sought their suffrages. The next and three succeeding biennial elections he was elected to the Legislature, and served with distinguished reputation in that body. While a member of the Legislature he first gave indications of his superior powers as a debater, and he increased, by frequent practice, his natural faculty for public speaking. His latent ambition was excited by success, he improved industriously the opportunities that offered of self-cultivation. From the position of a subaltern in the ranks of the Whig party, a position which was appropriately assigned him by his unaffected modesty and humble pretensions, he soon became recognized and acknowledged as a champion and a leader, and his unvarying courtesy, good nature and genial manners, united with a certain lofty disinterestedness, and general abnegation of self, made him a universal favorite.

During his legislative period he studied law, and removing to Springfield, he opened an office and engaged actively in practice. Business flowed in upon him, and he rose rapidly to distinction in his profession. He displayed remarkable ability as an advocate in jury trials, and many of his law arguments were masterpieces of logical reasoning. There was no refined artificiality in his forensic efforts. They all bore the stamp of masculine common sense; and he had a natural, easy mode of illustration, that made the most abstruse subjects appear plain. His success at the bar, however, did not withdraw his attention from politics. For many years he was the "wheel horse" of the Whig party in Illinois, and was on the electoral ticket in several Presidential campaigns. At such times he canvassed the State with his usual vigor and ability. He was an ardent friend of Henry Clay, and exerted himself powerfully in his behalf in 1844, traversing the entire State of Illinois, and addressing public meetings daily until near the close of the campaign, when becoming convinced that his labors in that field would be unavailing, he crossed over into Indiana, and continued his efforts up to the day of election. The contest of that year in Illinois was mainly on the tariff question. Mr. Lincoln, on the Whig side, and John Calhoun, on the Democratic side, were the heads of the opposing electoral tickets. Calhoun, late of Nebraska, now dead, was then in the full vigor of his really great powers, and was accounted the ablest debater of his party. They stumped the State together, or nearly so, making speeches usually on alternate days at each place, and each addressing large audiences at great length, sometimes four hours together. Mr. Lincoln, in these elaborate speeches, evinced a thorough mastery of the principles of political economy which underlie the tariff question, and presented arguments in favor of the protective policy with a power and conclusiveness rarely equaled, and at the same time in a manner so lucid and familiar and so well interspersed with happy illustrations and apposite anecdotes, as to secure the delighted attention of his auditory.

Mr. Lincoln has been a consistent and earnest tariff man from the first hour of his entering public life. He is such from principle, and from a deeply rooted conviction of the wisdom of a protective policy; and whatever influence he may hereafter exert upon the government will be in favor of that policy.

(Concluded in following Lincoln Lore.)

LINCOLN LORE

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February 10, 1941

EARLIEST LINCOLN BIOGRAPHY

(Continued from Lincoln Lore Number 617.)

In 1846 he was elected to Congress, and served out his term; and would have been re-elected had he not declined to be a candidate. As to the character of his services in that body, my information does not enable me to speak particularly. In the National Convention of 1848, of which he was a member,* he advocated the nomination of General Taylor, and sustained the nomination by an active canvass of his own State. In 1852 he was equally efficient in his efforts for General Scott, and was considered by the Whigs of Illinois and of the Northwest as one of their ablest and wisest leaders.

From 1849 to 1854, Mr. Lincoln was engaged assiduously in the practice of his profession, and being deeply immersed in business, was beginning to lose his interest in politics, when the scheming ambition and groveling selfishness of an unscrupulous aspirant to the Presidency brought about the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. That act of baseness and perfidy aroused the sleeping lion, and he prepared for new efforts. He threw himself at once into the contest that followed, and fought the battle of freedom on the ground of his former conflicts in Illinois with more than his accustomed energy and zeal. He fully appreciated the importance of the slavery issue, and felt the force of the moral causes that must influence the question, and he never failed to appeal to the moral sentiment of the people in aid of the argument drawn from political sources, and to illuminate his theme with the lofty inspirations of an eloquence, pleading for the rights of humanity. A revolution swept the State. For the first time a majority of the Legislature of Illinois was opposed to the Democratic administration of the Federal Government. A United States Senator was to be elected in place of General Shields, who had yielded to the influence of his less scrupulous colleague, and, against his own better judgment, had voted for the Kansas-Nebraska act. The election came on, and a number of ballots were taken, the almost united opposition voting steadily for Lincoln, but the anti-Nebraska Democrats for Trumbull. Mr. Lincoln became apprehensive that those men would vote for and elect Matteson; to prevent such a consummation, he went personally to his friends, and by strong persuasion, induced them to vote for Trumbull. He thus secured, by an act of generous self-sacrifice, a triumph for the cause of right, and an advocate of it on the floor of the Senate, not inferior in earnest zeal for the principles of Republicanism to any member of that body. It was not without difficulty, however, that this object was accomplished. The opposition throughout the State had with great unanimity looked to Mr. Lincoln to represent Illinois in the Senate, and it was with great reluctance that their representatives in the legislature could be induced to disappoint their constituents by giving their votes to another.

From his thorough conviction of the growing magnitude of the slave question and of the need of a strong effort to preserve the Territories to freedom, Mr. Lincoln was among the first to join in the formation of the Republican party, although the public opinion around him was strongly adverse to that movement. He exerted himself for the organization of the Republican forces in Illinois, and attended the first Republican Convention held in the State. This was in Bloomington in May, 1856. His speech in that Convention was of surprising power and eloquence, and produced great effect. In the contest of that year, Mr. Lincoln was at the head of the Illinois electoral ticket, and labored earnestly, though vainly, to wrest that State from the grasp of the pro-slavery Democracy, with the "walking magazine of mischief," as Douglas has been appropriately called, at its head.

When the campaign of 1858 was about to open, the voice of the Republican party of Illinois was so unanimous and enthusiastic in his favor as the successor of Judge

Douglas, that in a full State Convention of over five hundred delegates the unusual step was taken of nominating him for that office by acclamation. The enthusiasm of the delegates in Convention extended to their constituents. The party went into the contest with the name of Lincoln on all their banners, instituted Lincoln clubs, wore Lincoln badges, and held Lincoln meetings at almost every school house in the State. The respective parties were marshaled under leaders, who were fitting representatives of the principles of each. Lincoln, the consistent advocate of constitutional government, cognizant of indefeasible rights, and animated and controlled by a sense of human responsibility independent of conventional rules, placed himself upon the battlements of the Constitution, and summoned to his side the friends of law, order and humanity. Douglas, in the spirit of a system which assigns all power to a majority, and flatters the people in the concrete, while it cheats the individual of all security for his personal rights, appealed to popular prejudice and to the antipathies of race. The one held slavery to be an institution in conflict with the principles of free government, wholly dependent upon positive law, and never to be extended where it could be legitimately prohibited; while the other averred that the despotic will of any majority, though of a community existing only in a state of pupillage under the guardianship of federal authority "ought to be competent to establish it without question by that authority" without regard to moral considerations.—The contest excited intense interest and was maintained with infinite spirit. Lincoln, after vainly attempting to draw his opponent into a joint canvass of an entire State, met him in seven great debates in as many Congressional districts, and in the opinion of every candid judge, fairly overthrew him in argument on all controverted points. The result was, that though a majority of the popular vote was obtained by Lincoln, Douglas obtained by the instrumentality of an old and grossly unequal apportionment of the districts a majority of the Representatives, and thus secured his re-election to the U. S. Senate.

Since that great contest, Mr. Lincoln has repeatedly given his powerful aid in support of the Republican cause in other States, as in Ohio, Wisconsin and Kansas, during the present year, and in every instance he has been received with enthusiasm by the people, evincive of the hold he has on the popular heart. Wherever he speaks he draws together large crowds of interested listeners, upon whom he never fails to make a marked impression. Though a ready and fluent speaker, he avoids declamation, and is never betrayed into mere word-painting, which his good taste habitually rejects. He abhors emptiness as heartily as did the great Webster in his prime, and employs as the vehicle of his thoughts a style of singular clearness and simplicity. In his statements of facts he is scrupulously accurate, and to every opponent he exhibits the utmost fairness, candor and liberality, retorting no abuse, but preserving an unflinching courtesy even under the severest provocation. His manner is earnest, his arguments close and logical, and he reaches his conclusions by a process that seems to render those conclusions inevitable. Whether you agree with him or not, you cannot listen to him without being satisfied of his sincerity, and that his object is not victory, but truth.

In private life Mr. Lincoln is a strictly moral and temperate man of frank and engaging manners, of kind and genial nature, unaffectedly modest, social in disposition, ready in conversation, and passing easily from grave to gay and from gay to grave, according to the humor of the hour or the requirements of the occasion, a firm friend and yet not implacable to an enemy, a consistent politician, a good citizen, and an honest patriot.

*Note—Mr. Lincoln was not a member of the Convention, though in attendance as a citizen.



Lincoln Lore

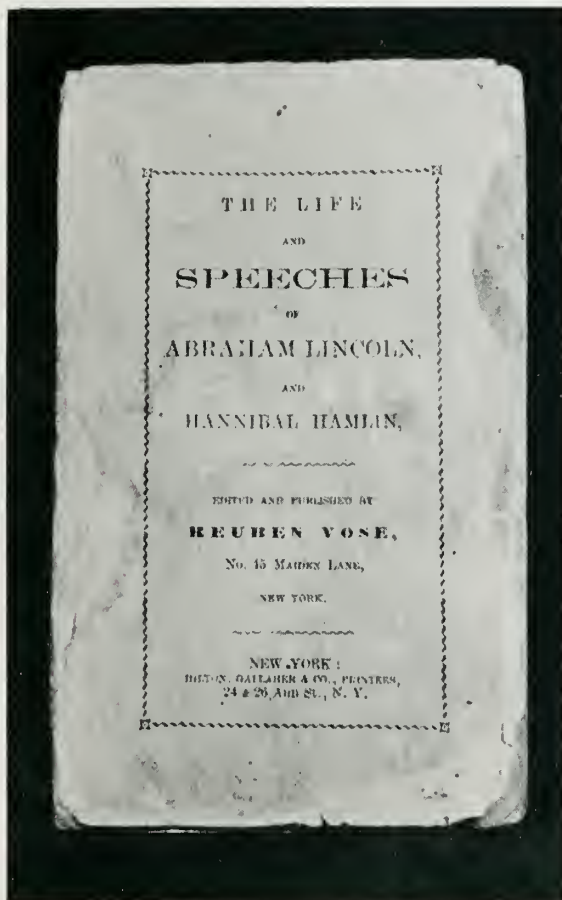
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Number 1429

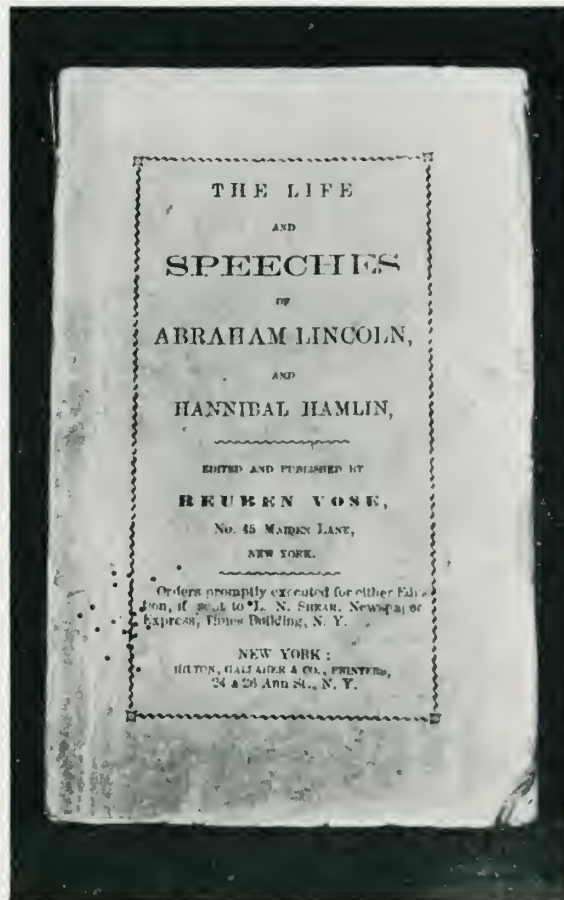
FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

March, 1957

THE VOSE BIOGRAPHY OF LINCOLN



M 86



M 86v

One of the rare biographies of the Sixteenth President is the 1860 campaign publication by Reuben Vose. A description of this rarity appears in Ernest James Wessen's "Campaign Lives of Abraham Lincoln 1860" which was published in *Papers In Illinois History And Transactions For The Year 1937* by The Illinois State Historical Society, 1938. The description follows:

VOSE, REUBEN

Cover Title: The Life/and Speeches/of/Abraham Lincoln,/and/Hannibal Hamlin,/(Rule)/Edited and Published by/Reuben Vose,/No. 45 Maiden Lane,/New York,/(Rule)/New York:/Hilton, Gallagher & Co., Printers,/24 & 25 Ann St., N. Y.

Collation: iii-li, text — at this point the publisher changed from Roman to Arabic numerals, and erroneously numbered the next page "42;" 42-71½, text; blank page, not included in pagination; 72-118, text;

four pages of advertising matter on same stock as the wrappers, and lettered A to D.

Binding: Tan paper wrappers. Verso of front wrapper bears copyright notice. Advertising matter on both sides of back wrapper.

Page Size: 4½ by 2¾ inches.

Publication Date: Week of June 11, 1860.

Since the publication of the Wessen bibliography, a variant of the Vose biography has been acquired by the Lincoln National Life Foundation. The only variation appears on the cover page immediately below New York.

(Rule): Orders promptly executed for either Edition, if sent to L. N. Shear, Newspaper/Express, Times Building, N. Y.

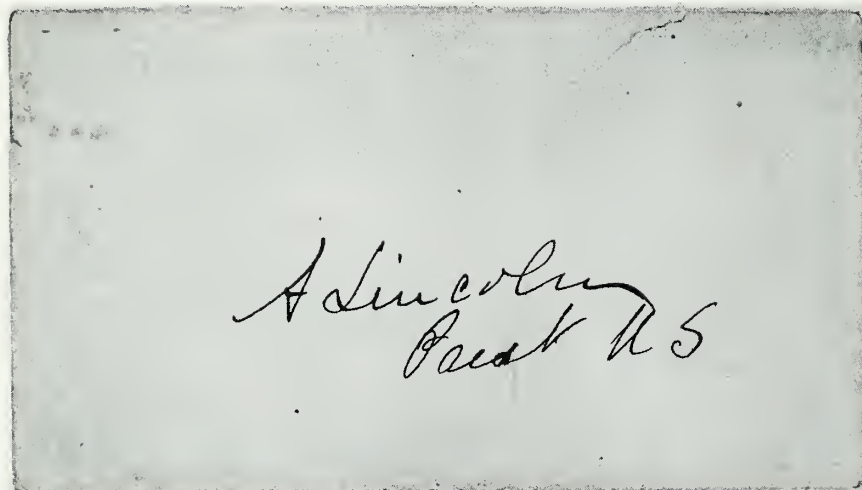
The bibliographer did considerable research on the Vose and he appended the following notes to his description of the publication:

(Continued on Page 3)

"DEAR MR. PRESIDENT"—LETTERS ADDRESSED TO LINCOLN

One hundred and eighty-four letters addressed to Abraham Lincoln are in the manuscript files of the Lincoln National Life Foundation. These letters all have one thing in common, namely; the writers wanted certain favors which they believed the President could grant. To quote Artemus Ward: "Sum wanted post offices, sum wanted collectorships, sum wanted furrin missions and all wanted sumthin." Some could not even wait until "Old Abe" could get to the White House and their letters bear dates of the period when Lincoln was president-elect.

Quite a few of the letters were written by men of prestige or responsible position, such as Oliver P. Morton, George B. McClellan, Peter Cooper, John W. Forney,



Envelope addressed to Lincoln from Willard's Hotel.

John J. Crittenden, Orville H. Browning, B. Gratz Brown, David Wilmot and others.

After reading these letters one cannot help but sympathize with the President who had to deal with the problems of patronage and to placate the temperamental governors, generals, senators and lesser politicians who were demanding that he give an ear to their special problem in their particular area. Then, too, one sympathizes with Lincoln because he must have labored diligently trying to read their atrocious handwriting.

A list of the letters with a notation as to their contents follows:

1. ADAMS, CHARLES C. (Baltimore, Md.) May 26, 1862
Request for appointment to post of hospital chaplain.
2. ALLISTON, JOHN (New Brighton, Pa.) Jan. 1861
Recommendation of Will Cumbach for mission to Berlin.
3. ANDREWS, RUFUS F. (New York, N. Y.) May 16, 1862
Recommendation of Rev. Alexander Clements for the post of hospital chaplain.
4. APPERSON, R. (City) July 31, 1861
Recommendation of Henry Pirtle for office of Judge of the Lower or Southern District Court of Ky.
5. ATKINSON, ROBERT J.
Recommendation of Thomas S. Woods of Ohio for office of Judge for the Territory of Ariz.
6. BAILY, BENJAMIN (New York, N. Y.) Jan. 17, 1865
Recommendation of A. W. Stone of Atlanta, Ga. for office of U. S. Attorney for the Southern District of Ga.
7. BAIRD, I. P. (Terre Haute, Ind.)
Recommendation of Samuel B. Gookins for office of Judge of the Supreme Court of the U. S.
8. BALCOM, RANSOM, & OTHERS (Binghamton, N. Y.) March 22, 1861
Recommendation of Edward C. Kattel of Binghamton, N. Y. for office of judge or secretary of one of the U. S. territories.
9. BALDWIN, HIRAM (Washington, D. C.) July 12, 1862
Application for the appointment to the office of Register of Wills.
10. BANGER, WILLIAM (New York) Nov. 9, 1864
Application for appointment to the post of paymaster in the Army.
11. BARNET, PUTNAM, & OTHERS (Terre Haute, Ind.) April 8, 1861
Recommendation of J. B. Gookins to fill vacancy on the U. S. Supreme Court bench occasioned by the death of Judge McLean.
12. BATES, BARTON (St. Louis, Mo.) Dec. 8, 1864
Recommendation of Gov. Willard P. Hall for appointment as Judge of the District Court of the U. S. for the Western District.
13. BEERS, S. A. (Brooklyn, N. Y.) Nov. 15, 1864
Application for a position in the Bureau of Freedmen in Md.
14. BENJAMIN, D. C. (Bantam, Ohio) Aug. 6, 1862
Application for appointment to the office of Chaplain at Camp Dennison, Ohio, or any other position available.
15. BENJAMIN, D. C. (Clarks-ville, Ohio) Dec. 22, 1864
Application for appointment to post of hospital chaplain in Tenn. or any other place available.
16. BLAKEY, GEORGE J. (Bowling Green, Ky.) Nov. 18, 1863
Appeal for executive clemency toward John Burnam, a former Confederate.
17. BRADLEY, W. A. (Washington, D. C.) Oct. 5, 1861
Application for appointment to the office of Register of Wills.
18. BROWN, A. (Pike, Muscatine, Co., Ia)
Application for chaplaincy.
19. BROWN, AMOS (Havana, N. Y.) Nov. 17, 1864
Application for chaplaincy in the Army or Navy.
20. BROWN, B. GRATZ (U. S. Senate) March 2, 1865
Recommendation of Col. Arnold Krekle of St. Charles, Mo. for appointment to the office of U. S. Judge in Mo.
21. BROWN, EDWIN F. (Washington, D. C.) Aug. 15, 1862
Recommendation of Andrew Rothwell for position as Commissioner of Police.
22. BROWNING, O. H. (Quincy, Ill.) Sept. 27, 1861
Recommendation of James Simpson of Winchester, Ky., for appointment as U. S. District Judge of Ky.
23. BROWNLOW, W. G., & OTHERS (Knoxville, Tenn.) Sept. 16, 1864
A request for a favorable consideration of Goldman B. Carden who desires a release of his Confederate son in prison at Camp Morton.
24. BUTLER, J. GEORGE (Washington, D. C.) June 25, 1862
Recommendation of Rev. G. A. Brown for the chaplaincy of the hospital at York, Pa.
25. CAPEHART, CHARLES E. (Wheeling, W. Va.) Dec. 16, 1864
Recommendation of Rev. David Trueman for appointment to the post chaplaincy at the U. S. A. Post Hospital.
26. CHAMBERS, ARTHUR (Washington, D. C.) Feb. 19, 1862
Application for office of "Resident Minister to Honduras" or the governorship of Utah or "any vacancies in the Territories, either in the Judicial or executive or elsewhere . . ."
27. CHOATE, CHARLES B.
Recommendation of A. W. Hendry for office as Judge in the Neb. Territory.
28. CLAFLIN, W., & OTHERS
Petition of delegates to the Chicago Convention from Mass. recommending John S. Keyes of Concord, Mass., for marshal of the district.

29. COFFEY, GEORGE A., & OTHERS (Philadelphia, Pa.) March 9, 1863
Petition recommending John Dolman for the position of Associate Judge of Ariz. Territory.
30. COFFEY, T. J. (Washington, D. C.) Sept. 18, 1863
Pardon of Jacob Jacoby of Ky. with all the papers in the case transmitted to the President.
31. COLE, G. E. (St. Paul, Minn.) Jan. 5, 1861
Recommendation of C. F. Buck for office of U. S. Marshal in the district.
32. COMEGGS, H. C. & OTHERS (Port Lookout) Aug. 4, 1862
Recommendation of Dr. D. J. Lee for a chaplaincy at the Hammond General Hospital.
33. COOPER, PETER (New York, N. Y.) Aug. 19, 1862
Recommending the breech loading musket and carbine invented by I. W. Wood for adoption by the Army.
34. CORWIN, R. G. (Columbus, Ohio) Jan. 30, 1861
Recommendation of Jesse H. McMath of Ohio for appointment of Chief Justice of Neb. Territory.
35. CRANE, E. F. (Headquarters 107th Regt. N. Y. V.) Dec. 15, 1862
Application for appointment as a hospital chaplain with a request to be relieved as chaplain of the 107th Regt. N. Y. Vols.
36. CRAVENS, J. A. (Washington, D. C.) Jan. 4, 1864
Request for pardon of L. M. Bently of Clarksville, Tenn.
37. CRITTENDEN, J. J. (Washington, D. C.) Aug. 3, 1861
Request that "the excellent lady who has addressed the accompanying letter to you, asking for appointment of her son as a cadet to Naval Academy . . . be made at your discretion."
38. CUDWORTH, W. H. (Camp Lincoln-near Harrison's Landing-James River) July 7, 1862
Requesting a transfer as Chaplain of First Regt. Mass. Vols. to Boston with the appointment of hospital chaplain.
39. CURTIS, GEORGE WILLIAM (Staten Island, N. Y.) April 11, 1863
Requesting the appointment of George Parsons of Brooklyn, N. Y., to the Naval School.
40. DAILY, S. G. (Peru, Neb. Territory) May 26, 1863
Recommendation of Elmer S. Dundy for appointment as District Judge in Neb.
41. DALE, JAMES W. (Media, Delaware Co., Pa.) June 23, 1862
Recommendation of Rev. A. W. Sprouse for post of chaplaincy in the Upland Hospital.
42. DASHIEL, J. M. (Washington Co., Md.) May 27, 1862
A poorly paid professor of Latin and Greek requests "some office in your power to bestow . . ."
43. DAVIDSON, WILLIAM S. (New York, N. Y.) Feb. 25, 1861
Recommendation of Justice Quackenbush for appointment of Marshal for the District of Columbia.
44. DENISON, CHARLES W. (Washington, D. C.) July 30, 1862
Request for a continuation of service as a chaplain in the U. S. General Hospital Department and a transfer to the Union Hospital in Georgetown.
45. DENNISTON, ROBERT (Salisbury Mills, N. Y.) May 22, 1862
Recommendation of Edmund I. Porter of N. Y. for appointment as governor or one of the judgeships of the Territory of Ariz.
46. DILLON, JOHN F. (Davenport, Ia.) March 1, 1861
Recommendation of B. W. Poor for appointment to a territorial judgeship in Neb.
47. DIMMICK, JOHN C. (New York, N. Y.) Feb. 20, 1861
Recommendation of John C. Perry for appointment "to a judicial station in one of the territories."
48. DOLE, W. P. (Washington, D. C.) Dec. 14, 1862
Recommendation of T. J. Barrett for appointment as a judge "in one of the new territories."
49. DONNELLY, IGNATIUS (St. Paul, Minn.) Jan. 7, 1861
Recommendation of C. F. Buck for the position of U. S. Marshal for the District of Minn.
50. DONNELLY, I. & OTHERS (Washington, D. C.) March 13, 1865
Recommendation of Joel B. Reiner of Stillwater, Minn. for the position of Marshal for the District of Minn.
51. DRUMM, J. H. (Philadelphia, Pa.) July 17, 1862
Request for a transfer as a chaplain or doctor to a hospital at Fortress Monroe, Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, Annapolis or elsewhere.
52. DURANT, HENRY F. (Boston, Mass.) Feb. 9, 1861
Recommendation of John S. Keyes for the office of U. S. Marshal for the Mass. District.
53. EDGERTON, SIDNEY
Recommendation of Samuel Pease of Neb. for appointment to the office of Governor of Neb.
54. ERRETT, RUSSELL (Harrisburg, Pa.) March 15, 1861
Recommendation of W. P. Sawyer of Pittsburgh for office of Marshal of the District of Columbia.
55. FARNHAM, S. W. (St. Anthony, Minn.) 1861
Recommendation of C. F. Buck for office of U. S. Marshal for the state of Minn.
56. FLETCHER, CHARLES FOSDICK (Philadelphia, Pa.) July 11, 1862
A proposal to build a permanent hospital beyond the limits of the city.
57. FOOTE, E. J. 1862
Request for appointment as a hospital chaplain.
58. FORNEY, J. W. (Washington, D. C.) April 7, 1861
Introduction of Mr. Jones who "wants to say some words of vital importance."
59. GALBRAITH, THOMAS J. (Shakapee, Scott Co., Minn.) Jan. 2, 1861
Recommendation of C. F. Buck of Winona County for office of U. S. Marshal for the District of Minn.
60. GILFILLAN, JAMES (St. Paul, Minn.) Jan. 30, 1861
Recommendation of George A. Nourse for office of U. S. District Attorney for the District of Minn.
61. GILL, R. T. (Washington, D. C.) Dec. 9, 1861
Requesting reappointment of nephew John W. Hamilton as First Lieutenant in the regular Army. For want of information the Senate refused to confirm the appointment. Lincoln's endorsement: "Senators have told me this young man was not confirmed last summer simply because nobody seemed to know him—I would like to re-nominate him, if it will not derange things. A. Lincoln. Dec. 12, 1861."
62. GREGORY, R. C. (Indianapolis, Ind.) Feb. 14, 1865
Recommendation of Daniel Mace of Lafayette for appointment to the office of Judge of the Court of Claims.
(To be continued in the April 1957 issue).

The Vose Biography, (Continued from Page 1)

"On May 26, Shear's 'Lightning News Express' advertised in the *New York Tribune* that Vose's life of Lincoln at fifteen cents would 'be ready on May 30th.' (Ready within four days, although he had not yet determined the number of pages the book would contain!)"

"In his efforts to attract agents, Vose advertised, on May 31, that 10,000 copies were 'now ready,' and further, that the book would contain 128 pages, and sell at fifteen cents; and finally, that the 'Irrepressible Edition' would 'be ready June 5th, or 6th, at 20¢.' The 'Irrepressible Edition' was also to contain 128 pages, and one wonders what it had to offer for that extra five cents. We will probably never know, for no copy is known; in fact I do not believe it was ever published.

"Instead of increasing his publicity with the alleged appearance of the pamphlet—as one would expect him to do—Vose does not seem to have advertised again until June 11, and then inserted only one or two brief notices. I believe that the few copies that were published appeared with the resumption of advertising, during the week of June 11."

Wessen is of the opinion that the source of the information contained in the biography was probably taken from a *Chicago Press and Tribune* release.

This miniature book was also a topic for *Lincoln Lore* number 419, April 19, 1937, entitled "Vose's Lincoln—A Rarity." That bulletin indicates that "the arrangement of the subject matter is as confusing as the page numbering" and "the type is six point and very difficult to read."

It is evident that the biography was prepared in great haste and the Republican candidate's name is given as Abraham Lincoln, A B Lincoln, A B M. Lincoln and A B R'M Lincoln.

Only about four copies of the Vose are now known to exist. Two copies, one a variant, are in the Foundation collection, another copy is owned by the Massachusetts Historical Society and the fourth copy is located in the Henry E. Huntington Library.

Jay Monaghan lists the Vose biography in his *Lincoln Bibliography 1839-1939* as item 86, however his note; "last two named copies (MHi and CSMH) have commas after 'Hamlin'", is confusing as both copies in the Foundation have commas after "Hamlin."

In 1938 the Foundation reprinted an exact copy of the Vose biography for distribution.

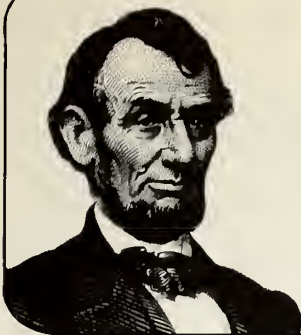
One of the earliest biographers^{us} of Abraham
Lincoln which appeared was Thayer's Pioneer Boy. It was
widely circulated and went into several editions during the
first year of its publication in 1863. Thayer in advancing
the theory that all outstanding men must have great mothers,
^{took} ~~takes~~ occasion in one of the early chapters of the book to
illustrate ^{the} ~~this~~ proposition with a testimony from John Adams
who stated:

William
Undoubtedly Herndon read Thayer's work as

-the reputed records of the Lincoln mother festival
did Dennis Hanks and other Lincoln associates. Inasmuch
as the mother appreciation appeared in the story of Lincoln,
it would not be ~~at~~ ^{it} all surprising ~~from~~ ^{if} any one, who
several months after the reading, ~~to~~ ^{should} think of the mother
tribute as coming from Lincoln himself. Of course this
is a mere speculation as to the origin of the
traditional concept.

vol. 100

"Such as I am whatever it is, and such as I
hope to be in all futurity, must be ascribed, under Pro-
vidence, to the precepts and example of my mother."



Lincoln Lore

March, 1980

Bulletin of the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum. Mark E. Neely, Jr., Editor.
Mary Jane Hubler, Editorial Assistant. Published each month by the
Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801.

Number 1705

“That Love Affair”: Did William Makepeace Thayer Nearly Uncover the Mary Owens Romance?

Early in the summer of 1862, a Boston publishing firm, Walker, Wise, and Company, asked William Makepeace Thayer to write a book for boys on Abraham Lincoln's early life. Thayer, a Congregationalist minister from Massachusetts, was already locally famous for his boys' biography of Nathaniel P. Banks called *The Bobbin Boy*. Walker, Wise, and Company gave Thayer some letters and documents by John Locke Scripps, the Chicago author of one of the earliest campaign biographies of Lincoln, to prepare him for the task. Thayer planned to use the successful *Bobbin Boy* as a model. He would tell “the actual early life” of Lincoln as “a story, the imagination doing nothing more than to connect facts in the most natural way.” This style was “more taking with the young” and allowed Thayer to follow a tested formula, inserting only the facts of another man's life. Thayer's object was “to show that ‘the boy is father of the man,’ showing the young that pluck and not luck makes the man, when it is accompanied with patience, perseverance, application sobriety, honesty &c.”

After about a month of work on the book, Thayer read a letter written from Lincoln's old Illinois friend, Orville Hickman Browning, to his publisher, Mr. Wise. It emboldened him to write Browning on July 18th, to inquire about more details of the President's early life. Thayer's letter, now in the Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress, reveals in detail the origins of his fabulously popular work on Lincoln.

The didactic author asked first about Lincoln's schooling:

The President went to school some in Kentucky before he moved to Indiana[.] There is where I want to begin the story of his life. Is it possible for me to learn any thing about his father's employment then, in what kind of a house he lived, how poor they were,

whether he went to school in a house built for a school, was his father's house & was the school house of logs? What is the name of the town where he was born?

Like Scripps, Thayer was a sturdy Republican, and he naturally seized on the story of the Lincolns' departure from Kentucky. “His life by Mr. Scripps,” Thayer continued, “says that his father left Kentucky because slavery oppressed the poor whites — could I learn any facts about that?” Lincoln had actually told Scripps that his father left Kentucky “partly on account of slavery; but chiefly on account of the difficulty in land titles in K[entucky].” Thayer would continue to stress the antislavery theme which appealed to Republicans.

As an Easterner, Thayer was anxious for the details of life on the frontier. He wanted to know about Lincoln's rolling logs and “going to huskings.” He also sought information about those things which made frontier life more civilized. He asked for the names and addresses of “any of his pastors or teachers.” He made a special point of asking for “Any facts relating to his temperance principles, & resisting temptations to drink.” Descriptions of the baneful effects of heavy drinking before the rise of the temperance movement and admonitions against drinking would form a principal theme in Thayer's Lincoln biography.

Thayer wanted the names and addresses of the Lincolns' neighbors in Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois. He especially desired the address of Lincoln's stepmother, for he would place heavy emphasis on the role of the mother and stepmother in Lincoln's home. Thayer had already written to Mary Todd Lincoln but received no reply. He told Browning that he would like to correspond with her or, at least, with the Lincolns' eldest son, Robert.

One of Thayer's questions was extraordinary:

That love affair — I



THE PIONEER BOY.

From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 1. This illustration from Thayer's book showed the pioneer boy cutting down a tree with his father in the Indiana wilderness.



FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL.

From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 2. The frontispiece of Thayer's book featured young Lincoln on his way to his first day in school.

should really like to learn the leading features of it, inasmuch as there is a matter of honor in it — a prominent part of my object is to show that his strict integrity has given him his *power of character*, which had as much to do with giving him the Presidency as anything.

What love affair? Scripps mentioned no romantic interests in Lincoln's life except his wife. Lincoln's romance with Mary Owens was unknown to the public until the appearance of Ward Hill Lamon's *Life of Lincoln* in 1872. How did Thayer know anything about any "love affair" before Mary Todd?

The answer must lie in Browning's letter to Wise, but the location of that letter is unknown. Browning did know about the Mary Owens affair. Lincoln's famous April Fools' Day letter about it was written to Browning's wife in 1838. That letter made a particular point of Lincoln's desire to do the honorable thing. Having promised to marry Mary Owens, he would live up to the promise even though he did not particularly want to marry her. Why Browning would have written Wise about the matter is unclear. Browning's diary shows that he was acquainted with a Mr. Wise from Boston before the war, but it is not clear whether this was the man associated with Thayer's publishing firm. Lincoln's letter about Mary Owens was old and entirely private, and it was hardly a proper subject for idle conversation, even with a close friend. In the wrong hands, it could have been fuel for ridicule of the President. Even if Browning mentioned it to Wise, it seems strange that Wise would have shown Browning's letter to Thayer without Browning's permission.

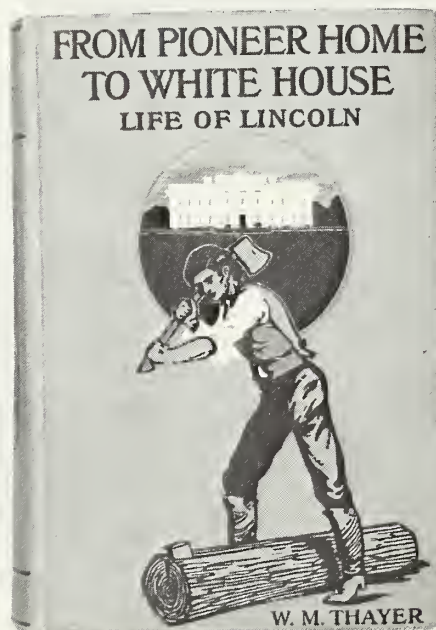
Years later, William Henry Herndon uncovered most of the details of the Mary Owens affair. It was a piece of detective work of which he was proud. Herndon had heard a story — he did not know whether it was true — "that during his term as President the lady to whom it was written — Mrs. O. H. Browning, wife of a fellow-member of the legislature — before giving a copy of it to a biographer, wrote to Lincoln asking his consent to the publication, but that he answered warning her against it because it was too full of truth." Thayer's letter makes Herndon's story somewhat plausible.



THE FIRST LETTER.

From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 3. Lincoln wrote his first letter, Thayer said, to obtain a preacher for Nancy Hanks Lincoln's funeral.



From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 4. Still popular in the 1920s, Thayer's expanded book featured more sophisticated art work on the cover.



From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 5. The 1882 edition of Thayer's expanded book featured on the cover, of all things, a football player.

We may never know. In the end, Thayer did not mention any romance in his book. On July 26, 1862, Browning saw President Lincoln at the White House and "read him a portion of the letter." Lincoln asked him to leave the letter with him. Browning did so, and thus the letter now appears in the Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress. As far as is known, Lincoln never replied to Thayer's letter. *The Pioneer Boy, and How He Became President* appeared in 1863 and was a great success. Seven thousand copies had been printed by the end of 1863, and eighteen thousand were in print in 1864. An 1865 edition noted that twenty-eight thousand copies had been printed. He expanded the book in 1882 and sold about sixty thousand copies by the end of the century. Though no longer read, Thayer's book was, for a time, the most complete biography of Lincoln, and its rags-to-riches theme was clearly a formula for successful writing in Lincoln's century.

Some New Light on the Matson Slave Case

Of the handful of Abraham Lincoln's legal cases which are widely known, the Matson slave case is by far the most controversial. The anomaly of the Great Emancipator's involvement on the side of a slaveholder in this fugitive slave case has vexed and puzzled historians for decades. Early biographies tended to ignore it altogether. Later, some writers tried to explain it away by suggesting that Lincoln had so little taste for this species of litigation that he performed poorly in court, lost the argument, and thus allowed the fugitives to go free. Historians in recent years have been content to admit that Lincoln was a complex man, not always consistent, and to emphasize the rapid growth of his anti-slavery feelings in the later years of his life. All of this literature, however, has been consistent in focusing on the lawyer's personal moral dilemma. The legal issues involved

in the case have been substantially ignored.

The Matson slave case was a hearing for a writ of *habeas corpus* in behalf of Jane Bryant and her four children. They were the slaves of Robert Matson, a Kentucky planter who owned land in Coles County, Illinois. Matson brought slaves to Illinois to farm the land every year but always returned them after harvest, thus avoiding any claim that his slaves were permanent residents on Illinois's free soil and, therefore, entitled to freedom. Matson employed Jane's husband, Anthony, as a permanent overseer on the Illinois farm. This was strictly legal, for Anthony was a free man.

In 1847 Jane Bryant had a serious falling-out with Matson's white housekeeper, who may have been the master's mistress. Anthony began to fear that the housekeeper might persuade Matson to sell Jane and the children South. The housekeeper had threatened to do so, and she appeared to be in a position to make her threat stick. Anthony sought the help of Gideon M. Ashmore and Hiram Rutherford, local antislavery men. They kept Jane and the children at Ashmore's inn in Oakland, Illinois. Matson sought the remedy of law to gain the return of his property. He employed attorney Usher F. Linder, who managed to have the slaves confined to the jail in Charleston, the county seat of Coles County. Ashmore and Rutherford obtained a writ of *habeas corpus*, demanding Illinois's reasons for confining the fugitives, and a hearing was held before Judges Samuel H. Treat and William Wilson on October 16, 1847.

Lincoln came to Coles County and was also engaged on Matson's side. The opposing attorneys, Orlando B. Ficklin and Charles H. Constable, argued that the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 and the Illinois Constitution made the slaves free by virtue of their residence on the soil of a state where slavery was illegal. Lincoln apparently argued that Jane Bryant was a seasonal worker following a long-accepted custom and was in no way a legal resident of the state. The judges ruled in favor of the slaves and declared them free.

The aforementioned facts in the case are common knowledge. New light comes from Don E. Fehrenbacher's *The Dred Scott Case: Its Significance in American Law and Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978). Professor Fehrenbacher explains that the legal difference between "domicile" and "sojourn" in a free state was a commonplace distinction in American jurisprudence in Lincoln's day. In Pennsylvania, for example, a master could remain in the state with his slaves for six months without affecting the legal status of the slaves. New York allowed a nine-month sojourn with slaves. In 1843 the Illinois Supreme Court had affirmed a master's right of sojourn in the state with his slaves, saying that to deny it would "tend greatly to weaken, if not to destroy the common bond of union amongst us." In the 1840s, however, New York and Pennsylvania revoked their laws allowing sojourn with slaves, and courts in other Northern states began to rule that slaves were freed merely by touching free soil. In the Matson case, some of Illinois's judges followed the new trend.

John J. Duff argued in *A. Lincoln: Prairie Lawyer* (New York: Rinehart, 1960) that Lincoln performed well in the case and that Ficklin and Constable performed poorly. All they had to do to assure her freedom, Duff claimed, was to cite as precedent the decision in *Bailey vs. Cromwell* — in which Lincoln himself had gained freedom for a Negro girl named Nance by arguing that the Illinois Constitution and the Northwest Ordinance prevented her being a slave in the state! Duff's argument betrays his lack of understanding of the issues in the Matson case. The issues in *Bailey vs. Cromwell* were altogether different. Nance was a resident of Illinois, an indentured servant rather than a slave. The Supreme Court ruled that Illinois law presumed a person free without any proof to the contrary, and Nance's "owner" could not produce that proof. The important point is that she lived in Illinois. *Bailey vs. Cromwell* had nothing to do with "domicile" and "sojourn."

The real marvel in the case is the reasoning of Treat and Wilson. Both men had been members of the Illinois Supreme Court in 1843, when it affirmed the right of sojourn with slaves in the state!

In the Matson slave case, Lincoln and Linder had the law on their side but not the judges.

